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ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Letter dated 17 July 1992 from the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

At its twenty-sixth session, held in Paris from 15 October to 7 November 1991, the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) unanimously adopted resolution 5.6, entitled "Consultations with the United Nations with a view to declaring 1995 United Nations year for tolerance".

In paragraph 2(d) of the resolution, the General Conference invited me "to examine, in consultation with the United Nations, the appropriate arrangements for declaring 1995, which is the fiftieth anniversary of UNESCO, United Nations year for tolerance, and to prepare a declaration on tolerance that might be discussed and possibly adopted on that occasion".

I am sure you will agree that the world situation and the transformations it has undergone in recent years require more rigorous action to encourage coexistence between communities and to promote a culture of tolerance among men.

Accordingly, in keeping with the mandate given to me by the General Conference, I am writing to request you to draw the attention of the Economic and Social Council to this initiative by the UNESCO General Conference.

I remain at your disposal for any further information you may require. Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Federico MAYOR
Director-General

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Annex

RESOLUTION 5.6 OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Consultations with the United Nations with a view to declaring 1995 United Nations year for tolerance

The General Conference,

Considering that the Charter of the United Nations affirms in its preamble that the practice of tolerance is one of the principles to be applied to attain the ends pursued by the United Nations of preventing war and maintaining peace,

Recalling the relevant provisions of UNESCO's Constitution relating to the promotion of knowledge and mutual understanding,

Recalling resolutions 6.21 and 3.331(d) adopted by the General Conference at its thirteenth and fifteenth sessions respectively, and relevant subsequent recommendations, especially resolutions 5.1 (para. 2.A(c)), 5.2 and 7.1 (para. 2.A(a)(iv)), adopted at its twenty-fifth session,

Recalling the guidelines given in the third Medium-Term Plan (25 C/4 Approved, para. 394) on dialogue between different philosophical and spiritual schools of thought, and on its role in education, based on the shared values of peace, tolerance and human dignity,

Deeply concerned by the new forms of intolerance that threaten the ideals on which the United Nations was founded and for which UNESCO ceaselessly strives in its own fields of competence,

Convinced that ethical reflection contributes to better control of the harmful effects of modernity on the natural environment and on societies and cultures,

Convinced that tolerance - the recognition and appreciation of others, the ability to live together and to listen to others, and the capacity for give-and-take - is the sound foundation of any just and enlightened civil society and of an equitable world order,

1. Appeals to all Member States to develop a spirit of tolerance based on their philosophical, religious and cultural values, on their humanist tradition and on the most widely recognized universal values;

2. Invites the Director-General:

(a) to explore the possibility of strengthening the Organization's programme on ethics and the specific study of spiritual, ethical and cultural values and how they have evolved;

(b) to encourage Member States to make the public aware of the importance of the issues of tolerance and mutual understanding and to foster a healthy and constructive awareness of differences as a source of mutual enrichment;

(c) to explore ways and means of promoting international tolerance in accordance with the aims and principles of the United Nations;

(d) to examine, in consultation with the United Nations, the appropriate arrangements for declaring 1995, which is the fiftieth anniversary of UNESCO, United Nations year for tolerance, and to prepare a declaration on tolerance that might be discussed and possibly adopted on that occasion.